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from which paths go in all directions to the various dwelling enclosures. The great way now makes a right-angle turn towards the east. We are now on the low flat summit of the island. Following this road, in a few minutes we find ourselves in a new dancing-ground, half as long again as that of Pete-hul, giving a broad sense the other lacks, but at the same time being less compact, since there is here no natural arena. This is in fact two dancing-grounds joined end to end. In order to explain the existence of these dancing-grounds it is necessary to anticipate to some extent the chapters on Social Organisation by saying that, soon after the creation of Pete-hul, certain elements from this village seceded to found an offshoot village named Togh-vanu. These two together now form one patrilineally exogamous double-village called Pete-hul–Togh-vanu, which occupies the whole of the west Side of the Island. Each of these has its own dancing-ground, but that of the offshoot village Togh-vanu has been added to by the intrusion of an alien element, the survivors from Tolamp, one of the submerged islands already mentioned. These folk, having for some generations subsisted on the mainland, became finally so reduced in numbers that they could no longer support themselves as an independent community, and the last remnants of them, claiming kinship with the inhabitants of Togh-vanu, finally settled on Vao where the Togh-vanu folk gave them land and allowed them to build a new dancing-ground end to end with theirs.

Each of these two dancing-grounds has its own set of stone monuments, similar to those already seen at Pete-hul, and its own set of gongs. The westernmost, that which we enter first, belongs to Tolamp, the easternmost to Togh-vanu. Fig. 2 and Plates XIV, XV, XVII and XVIII illustrate some of the stone monuments belonging to Togh-vanu.

Towards the end of this dancing-ground a way leads down to the sea at the southern end of the beach called Kowu from which we have come, and which Togh-vanu is thus seen to share with its parent-village Pete-hul. This way also on approaching the beach divides into two, one path for the women and another for the men. We will not, however, go down this path, but will continue along the great way through the centre of the island which follows the slightly raised ridge that forms a minute watershed running across the island roughly from west to east.

Asymmetrical Division of the Island into Two unequal "Sides"

At the far end of Togh-vanu dancing-ground are more habitations, with paths radiating in all directions. At first sight these habitations, clustered together as they are, would appear to belong to one village. But they do not. Between them there runs an invisible line, here marked by a path but elsewhere by nothing, which divides off one side of Vao

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of any single Small Island today greatly exceed 400,[1] and that of the two promontories is considerably less. I shall, however, in the following pages make only very occasional use of this term, since the natives' own habit of referring to themselves by the names of their islands or promontories is equally exact and has the advantage of conforming with their own methods of thought.

The population of each Small Island is divided into a number of patrilocal villages in which descent is overtly patrilineal, marriage being regulated at first sight on a simple basis of local patrilineal exogamy. The exogamous patrilineal unit may consist of:

(1) A single-village.
(2) A double-village, sometimes comprising the whole of one Side of the Island.
(3) A group of villages comprising a whole island, as on Wala.[2]

Thus, in each unit formed of a single-village, double-village or group of villages, the population is made up of males all claiming descent from a common ancestor or ancestors in the male line, together with their wives, and their unmarried sisters and daughters. According to the rule of patrilineal exogamy with patrilocal residence, no man may marry any woman born in his own village or group of villages and who could thus claim common ancestry with him in the male line. Thus, every woman on marriage leaves the village in which she was born and goes to live in that of her husband, and the children born of the marriage belong to the husband's patrilineal kin. The patrilineal kin is thus a clan in the true sense of the term, with the men all congregated in their own ancestral patrilineal village and the women seeking husbands outside. The system embraces the whole area under consideration, since marriages take place not only with members of other villages on the same island (except in the case of Wala), but also with those of other Small Islands, as well as of the villages on the adjacent mainland of Malekula.

This pronounced system of overt patrilineal exogamy has given rise to the prevailing opinion that descent in these islands, as in other parts of Malekula, is purely "patrilineal." That this overt patrilineal organisation forms, however, only one aspect of the social scheme, will be seen clearly when we come to examine the kinship systems of the various islands.[3]

What has been said is enough for the moment to demonstrate the interdependence of all the Small Island communities and the dominance of the patrilineal principle in the regulation of residence.

With this common background, let us now briefly survey the social organisation of the various islands with regard to the arrangement and inter-relation of their villages.

[1] For exact numbers see Appendix I, pp. 745 ff.
[2] See footnote on p. 56.
[3] See Chapters V and VI.

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Arrangement of Villages in the Various Islands

Reference to Map II, appearing on page 28, will show that the island of Vao is not peculiar in being divided both geographically and socially into two unequal Sides. This is a basic feature of social organisation also on all the Small Islands. A second point common to all is the fact that, apart from refugee communities, the population of each island is divided into six villages, of which two are on what is regarded as the Superior Side of the Island and four on the other. A third point of similarity is that in each case the Superior Side of the Island is that possessing the best beach, which always faces the mainland and, containing only one double-village or two single-villages, is in all cases the smaller, while the Inferior seaward Side, containing four villages, is the larger.

Here, however, the similarity ends. Subject to these basic features common to all the Small Islands, each individual island differs from the others in the precise way in which its component villages are grouped together into exogamous units.

Vao.

In Vao the six villages are grouped into three pairs so as to form three double-villages, one double-village on the Superior Side of the Island and two double-villages on the Inferior Side. The solidarity of each of these three double-villages impressed itself so strongly on Speiser in 1910 that he described the population of Vao as being divided into "three large villages," [1] and during the time of my visit they were equally intact. The swiftness of the change now taking place in these islands is, however, shown by the fact that Godefroy, writing nearly twenty years later, refers to the four villages on the Inferior Side as having "no kinship ties." [2] This phrase presumably refers to a state of affairs similar to that on Atchin, where, at the time of my visit, each of the corresponding four villages on the Inferior Side was an exogamous unit. This tendency for the two double-villages on this Side of each Island to split up appears, for reasons given below,[3] to be inherent in the kinship system, and is but one aspect of the general collapse of sectional systems in this part of Melanesia. This process being more advanced on Atchin than on Vao, and the Inferior Side of Vao being in close contact with that island, this contact has apparently hastened the collapse on this Side of Vao. Since at the time during which my field-work was carried out, however, the three double-villages on Vao still functioned as such, this subsequent development will be ignored so far as my own results are concerned.

[1] Speiser, 3, p. 102.
[2] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 54.
[3] See p. 167.

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Atchin.

On Atchin there is now only one exogamous double-village, occupying the Superior Side of the Island facing the mainland. This double-village is named, and its component twin-villages are also named.[1] On the Inferior Side of the Island the remaining four villages are, as already stated, no longer grouped into double-villages, but each forms an exogamous unit by itself. It is said, however, that formerly this was not the case, and that the entire island once formed a single unit.

Wala.

On Wala, the historic sequence which we have noted on Atchin is reversed, the entire island now forming a single exogamous unit, with two separate villages on one side and four on the other, though it is said that formerly each village was a unit in itself.[2]

Uripiv.

On Uripiv, regarding which island my information is very slight, there would appear to be three villages on one side (one of which may possibly be intrusive) and four on the other, two of which form an exogamous pair, the rest being separate units.

Mainland villages.

Regarding the organisation of mainland villages I have no information. There are, however, certain mainland villages between which and some of the Small Island villages there are traditional marriage connexions.[3]

New forms of culture diffused to the Small Islands from the mainland villages of Lawor and Bot-walim. Vao retains older form of culture.

These differences, as will be shown in later volumes, are due to the new forms of culture disseminated from the two now extinct villages of

[1] This is the double-village of Ruruar, with its twin-villages Pweter-tsûts and Olep.

[2] Wala is divided from the neighbouring island of Rano only by a very narrow strait, and it is possible that these two islands may at one time have been regarded as a single unit, in which case the two islands may have corresponded socially to the two "Sides of the Island" on Vao and Atchin, in spite of the fact that Wala itself now appears to have two "Sides." This supposition receives support from Mgr. Douceré's statement (Douceré, p. 292) derived from Père Salomon, at one time missionary on that island, that "Wala men marry Rano women and Rano men marry Wala women." This does not tell the whole story, since many marriages occur also between the natives of Wala and those of Atchin and to a less extent of Vao, but it certainly indicates a division into exogamous moieties, one such moiety including the whole of Wala and the other the whole of Rano. An exceptional position, however, is occupied by the Wala village of Mel-nator, said to have been founded by the shipwrecked crew of a canoe from Raga some six or seven generations ago whose history is well known on the island, and who in consequence of their foreign origin are permitted to marry members of other Wala villages (as well as those of other islands as shown by the genealogies I recorded on Atchin).

[3] See p. 162.

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Lawor and Bot-walim formerly situated on the mainland opposite Wala. There is a considerable body of evidence, however, which suggests that at one time all the Small Islands were even more similar in organisation than they are today, and that the existing organisation on Vao is the model to which all formerly conformed. It would be anticipating future volumes to produce all the evidence here, and I will content myself now with repeating that it is on this account, and with a view to tracing the change, that I have chosen Vao as the subject of the first volume in this series.

Owing to the wealth of material, I propose in this volume to reduce references to the other islands to a minimum, leaving the description of the processes of change occurring in them to future publications, and to concentrate here exclusively on the older type of social organisation still existing on Vao. Even on Vao, influences disruptive of the old forms of culture are already at work, one example of which is seen in the tendency already mentioned for the two double-villages on the Inferior Side of the Island to split up into four exogamous units.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION ON VAO

"Sides of the Island."

As we have seen, the island of Vao is primarily divided, both geographically and socially, into two asymmetrical Sides. These Sides are not named, members of each moiety referring to the other simply as *tosan*, meaning "side," or, as we should say, "the other side." In order to distinguish these from the numerous other progressively dual divisions of society we shall meet with in this chapter, I will refer to them as "Sides of the Island." The two Sides of the Island, though indispensable to one another as parts of a single organisation, live in a traditional state of enmity one with the other.[1]

Double-villages.

On the Superior Side, facing the mainland and sharing possession of the best beach called Kowu, are two named villages, Pete-hul and Toghvanu, which together form the unnamed patrilineal exogamous double-village which occupies this Side of the Island.[2]

On the Inferior seaward Side of the Island are the two unnamed patrilineal exogamous double-villages composed respectively of the named villages Venu and Peter-ihi, occupying the eastern half of the central ridge, and Singon and Norohure, occupying the easterly point.

[1] For detailed accounts of this enmity, see Chapters XXIII on Warfare.

[2] One aspect of the superiority of this double-village is the fact that its inhabitants regard themselves as philological purists, rejecting linguistic innovations from Atchin, such as are favoured by those of the Inferior Side of the Island (Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 54).

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Parent and offshoot villages.

Just as the whole island is divided into Superior and Inferior Sides, so also in each double-village one component village is regarded as superior, and the other as inferior. In each case the superior village represents the original foundation and will therefore be referred to as the parent village, of which the inferior village is the offshoot.

The six villages of Vao are paired in this respect as follows:[1]

	Superior (parent) Village	Inferior (offshoot) Village
Superior Side of the Island	Pete-hul	Togh-vanu
Inferior Side of the Island	Peter-ihi	Venu
	Singon	Norohure

FIG. 5

This phenomenon of parent and offshoot villages is always represented by the natives as being due to historical accident. As each double-village, however, is so split, and as the six villages so formed constitute the essential organisation of the island, we shall have to seek further for the real meaning of this arrangement. The historical explanation as given by the natives for the bisection of the Superior Side will be given in the next chapter. The actual mechanism causing the split and the "inferiority" of the offshoot villages will be dealt with in the chapters on Kinship.

Refugee communities.

The only sections of the community not referred to in the above account are:

(*a*) The refugee community of Tolamp, descended from the inhabitants of a now submerged island formerly situated between Vao and Atchin. The survivors and their descendants first took refuge on the mainland, where they built a number of villages in succession till in recent years the last remnants of them settled on Vao, on land belonging to the village of Togh-vanu, with which they had always had close kinship ties, and made a dancing-ground adjoining that of their hosts. Owing

[1] The number and names of married men in each village in the year 1932 are given on page 746. It is worth noting that the population on each Side of the Island is approximately equal.

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to the fact that they acquired many of the chief Maki rites from the mainland of Malekula before these were acquired on Vao, they hold, despite their small numbers, a very special position on the island. Their history is recorded in Chapter XXII.

(*b*) The two former communities of Lavame, which has only three surviving members, also now living at Togh-vanu, and Handillagh, which is extinct. Lavame formerly possessed two dancing-grounds. The now deserted dancing-ground marked in Map III as being on the path leading from Le-siwar to Togh-vanu is probably one of these. The inhabitants formerly had close kinship ties with the mainland village of Le-huru. A tale dealing with the quarrel between Lavame and Handillagh is given on p. 80.

(*c*) The refugee community of Le-se-kere, of which only one man survives.

None of these, however, affect the essential organisation of the island, and they may therefore be left out of account here, with the passing remark that the confusion in the stories regarding the origin of the various Vao villages cited in the next chapter may well have arisen partly through a number of refugee communities attaching themselves to existing villages and so giving rise to contradictory legends.

I will confine myself in this chapter to a description of the overt social organisation, so far as I recorded it, of the six villages into which the native Vao population is divided.

Dancing-grounds.

Every Vao village possesses one dancing-ground,[1] called *ne-sar*,[2] which is the focal point of the village, the place where the stone-platforms, dolmens and monoliths, and gongs connected with the Maki, are set up, and the scene of the chief Maki rites. Though in the centre of the village and not guarded by any physical barrier, no woman may set foot on the soil of a dancing-ground except during certain dances and rites connected

[1] There are exceptional cases in which one village has two dancing-grounds (see pp. 61, 89).

[2] Sometimes referred to as *le-sar*, using the locative particle *le-* in place of the indefinite article *ne-*. The use of this word for dancing-ground, shared also by the adjacent Malekulan coastal villages, is, so far as I know, unique in the Malekulan area in which, as also on the remaining Small Islands and in Ambrim, the usual term used for it is some form of the word (*h*)*amal*, which in its turn is related to *ghamal* (see footnote p. 60). The root *sar* is, however, used in this sense also in South-East Oba, where in the district of Lologharo the word for dancing-ground is *sare*, in Losigwei *na-sar*, and in Lol-mangwe *sara* (Layard, 9). In South Raga it is *sar* (Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 377). In Vanua Lava "a man may plant a cycas in his garden as a sign that it is *sare tamate*, i.e. the lodge or resting-place of a *tamate*" (Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 89). Dr. Capell suggests that the word is probably derived from the Indonesian *saghep*, "to sweep." Compare Mota *sara*, meaning both "court," "open space," and "to sweep"; *sarag*, "to wipe away"; *sarav*, "to rub," etc. By extension, *sara* also means "to gather, bring together," and *sargag* "to assemble" (Codrington, 2).

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361 535 village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on Vao. According to this account, fully related below,[1] there was in the beginning only one village, Pete-hul, which was founded by two brothers, each of whom constructed his own dancing-ground, both being placed end to end as in the modern village of Peter-ihi. Later, owing to changes in the kinship system which will be fully discussed in Chapter VI, some of the descendants of the younger brother split off from the parent community to found the offshoot village of Togh-vanu by the construction of a separate dancing-ground some little distance away. I mention this here as a possible explanation of the existing two dancing-grounds end-to-end at Peter-ihi, the reason for which I omitted to enquire into on the spot.[2]

"Sides of the Stone."

62 616 We have already noted (1) the division of the island into two moieties, and (2) that of each double-village into two twin-villages.

The next sub-division to be recorded is that of the population of each village into two yet further patrilineal moieties called *tosan na-vatu*. We have already met with the word *tosan* used by itself as referring to the two unnamed "Sides of the Island." Here also the word *tosan* means "side," and, combined with the word *na-vatu*, "stone," means "Side of the Stone." As in the case of the two "Sides of the Island," these two moieties are unnamed, members of each moiety referring to members of the other simply as *tosan na-vatu*, "Side (i.e. the other Side) of the Stone." [3]

Organisation of the Double-Village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on the Superior Side of the Island

Pete-hul founded by Ta-ghar.

62 What has been said above applies to every village on the island. With regard to the further dual divisions into which society is organised, we are faced with the fact of new disturbing influences from Atchin which have to some extent upset the old order.

[1] See p. 89.

[2] The situation in regard to Peter-ihi is, however, complicated by the fact that this village is already provided with an offshoot village, Venu. It would appear that the same process which caused the formation of the original offshoot village is again in operation, and that the parent village is once more in process of dividing into two.

[3] Natives of Vao automatically know to which Side of the Stone this phrase refers, since it must be that Side of the Stone in the speaker's own village to which he himself does not belong. When speaking to strangers, or of the Sides of the Stone in another village, distinction between the two Sides is made by referring specifically to the two Quarters (see p. 70 and Fig. 5) of which each Side is composed. Thus, in the case of Pete-hul, specific reference can only be made by speaking of one Side of the Stone as "*tosan na-vatu La-mbot-na-ninge, Nalu*," these being the names of the two Quarters composing one Side (see below), and of the other as "*tosan na-vatu La-mbet-ra, La-mbarang*."

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There is in fact only one village on Vao which, owing to its alleged foundation by the sky-deity Ta-ghar, is said by the natives to have an internal organisation which is, as they put it, "straight," or as we should say, "perfect." This is the village of Pete-hul on the Superior Side of the Island. It was therefore to this village and its offshoot Togh-vanu that I turned my attention, and to which the following description applies. As will be seen, of the two villages composing this Side of the Island, it is in fact only the parent-village of Pete-hul that lives up to this reputation for perfection, the offshoot village of Togh-vanu failing to be completely perfect, for reasons which will be apparent when we come to study the kinship system.

Quarters and "Quarter-Lodges."

In the "perfect" village of Pete-hul, each of the two unnamed moieties called "Sides of the Stone" is further divided into two sub-moieties called *bang-ne-im*. The word *ne-im* means "house" or "group of houses," and, as the word implies, each of the four patrilineal sub-clans thus formed occupies a given district in the village, corresponding literally to the four "Quarters" of a town (see Map IV). I did not enquire at the time into the meaning of the first syllable of the term, *bang*, but it is probably identical with the word *na-mbange* meaning "banyan tree." These trees have a semi-sacred character, and it is possible that the numerous banyan trees found throughout the island were at one time associated with the "Quarters" of villages.

Each Quarter centres round a large building, sacred to men, called *na-tamp*. These *na-tamp* are smaller than the village *ghamal*, but much larger than the dwelling-houses. Of the word *na-tamp*, *na-* is the indefinite article, and the essential syllable is *tamp*, one of the many Malekulan variants of the Austronesian word of which the best-known form is the Polynesian *tabu*, meaning sacred. Each *na-tamp* is situated immediately alongside the cemetery in which the oldest and most honoured members of the male section of the Quarter in question, those called *mer-sean*,[1] or "greybeards," are buried. It is to these cemeteries that the word *tamp*, "sacred," really refers. The corresponding word in Atchin is *la-tap*, meaning both cemetery and its accompanying building. In each case the close association between the two is shown by a high wall enclosing both building and cemetery, as well as an open space before the former which serves as a common meeting-ground for the male members of the Quarter. Inside this building and on the open space before it the most important affairs affecting the whole Quarter are discussed. Here the main rites in honour of the dead take place, and the communion feasts are held. No women are admitted save when invited, with the exception of certain occasions when the female patrilineal relatives of the deceased

[1] See p. 531.

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woroan discussed in later chapters. This is the nominal form of the verb *wor*, widely used in this part of Melanesia as meaning "to come forth," and in a special sense "to come forth from a woman," and so "to be born." In a more technical sense still, the word *wor* is used in Ambrim as a noun meaning "marriage section," in the sense explained on p. 97, and on Vao the word *woroan* is used in a number of ways, one of which appears to be "matrilineal descent group." [1] It is probably in this sense that the word is used here, for it will be noted that it is the "matrons" of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu who own these special Lodges. In other words, this rather obscure statement appears to indicate that ownership is not in the hands of women born in the village, who all marry elsewhere, but, on the contrary, in those of married women who do *not* belong by birth to the double-village in question. It would appear, both from this and from the fact that "only such women who have been born there [i.e. in this enclosure] have the right of entry," that these Lodges are not patrilineal but matrilineal institutions and represent a survival, despite the existing patrilocal organisation, of the former system of overt matrilineal descent of which traces are still to be found in the terminology of kinship.[2] This supposition is supported by Speiser's report that special houses in which women give birth are found also in the matrilineal islands of Oba and Maewo and in North Raga, but not in the patrilineal districts of South Raga or in Ambrim and Malekula.[3] Such Women's Lodges no longer exist in Atchin, where the matrilineal element in the kinship system is much weaker than it is on Vao.

Gardens

As has already been pointed out,[4] each village possesses its own tracts of land on the mainland of Malekula, where the main gardens are, and to which the natives travel daily in their canoes except during hurricanes and at times of special ritual activity. Each village has its own beach, or section of beach, on Vao, and its corresponding landing-place on the mainland. In addition to the mainland gardens, each village also possesses its share of uninhabited land on Vao. This land, however, like that on all the Small Islands, is largely given over to pigs, which roam around the villages, so that but little cultivation takes place there, and those plots that are used for gardening must be heavily fenced. Exigencies of time did not permit me to make a detailed study of land tenure on Vao, as I did on Atchin, and for all matters dealing with this and with agriculture, the seasons and the calendar, the reader is referred to my forthcoming volumes on that island. There the only gardens made on the Small Island itself are of a ritual nature. All essential cultivation takes place on the Malekulan mainland.

[1] See pp. 133, 138. [2] See p. 126. [3] Speiser, 3, p. 282. [4] See p. 25.